



Photos by Airman 1st Class Nathan Putz

Grand Forks Air Force Base KC-135s sit on the ramp at Fairchild Air Force Base, Wash. The last Grand Forks jets left the last week of April and will be at Fairchild for the next six months. More than 300 Warriors from various career fields will perform their duties at Fairchild AFB during the relocation.

KC-135s fly west for the summer

By Staff Sgt. Monte Volk
Public affairs

KC-135 Stratotankers filled with Warriors of the North. started arriving at Fairchild Air Force Base, Wash., April 20 for a projected six-month stay.

In all, more than 370 Airmen and 20 KC-135s have relocated there and at Hector Field at the International Airport in Fargo.

The relocation is part of a \$27.5 million runway construction that will ensure Grand Forks' nearly 50-year-old runway remains in compliance with current Air Force standards.

"The runway was originally intended for fighters when it was constructed in the late 1950s," said Col. Bill Bender, 319th Air Refueling Wing commander.

"When the base's mission was changed to bombers it was widened to accommodate them. Because of the manner in which the runway was widened, it could even-

tually fail to meet Air Force and Federal Aviation Administration standards. The age of the runway also makes for increasing maintenance costs. This project will fix all that."

Why Fairchild?

"Fairchild was a logical choice since we share the same mission, they already have the facilities and it allows us to train together and fight the Global War on Terrorism together," said Lt. Col. Bruce Hendrickson, 319th Air Refueling Wing director of staff.

Flying operations for both wings will not be affected by the relocation.

"As supertanker wings, we are mission enablers and understand how to pick up and operate at various locations throughout the world," said Colonel Hendrickson. "...we work together when we deploy, now, we're doing it at home."

Completion of runway construction and the return of the Grand Forks' aircraft are expected by Nov. 1.

Base donates computers to two local schools

By Airman 1st Class Patrice Clarke
Public affairs

The 319th Medical Group donated more than \$100,000 in computer equipment to two local schools April 8.

Adams and Edmore elementary schools in Walsh County, N.D., received 71 central processing units, 165 monitors, six laptops, one server and one compact disc tower as part of the Defense Computers for Schools program, which provides surplus computers and peripherals to secondary schools.

"Rich Feast (319th Medical Support Squadron systems specialist) and I were at a school basketball game and we started talking about what the base does with its old computer equipment," said the schools' super-

intendent, Keith Arneson. "Mr. Feast informed me that there were a couple programs out there and he would look into it for me."

That conversation got the ball rolling said 1st Lt. Kevin Ramsey, 319th Medical Information Flight commander.

"Mr. Feast came back and researched different programs and then came across the Defense Computers for Schools program," said Lieutenant Ramsey.

Through the program federally recognized schools can apply for the surplus equipment. On the military side, all the computer systems must be "advertised" by the Defense Reutilization and Marketing Service (DRMS), and if there are no Department of Defense buyers for the systems then they can be released at no charge to the schools, Lieutenant Ramsey said.

"In the Medical Group it is imperative that we have the most up-to-date technology available," said Lt. Col. Robert Steed, 319th Medical Operations commander. "The systems that we get rid of aren't bad or damaged, they just aren't fast enough for the high-tech stuff that we do. Most of these computers are only about two years old. All of this equipment was in a storage area just taking up much-needed space."

"We were just going to do the regular process with DRMS," said Lieutenant Ramsey. "Through that process only about 10 or 11 of the computers might actually get used. The rest would just sit on a shelf. This way the computers are going to be put to good use."

The donated computers will be used for new computer labs, according to school officials.

RODEO gives Warriors chance to shine

Top Grand Forks AFB aircrews, maintainers, security forces bring their best game to McChord AFB

By 1st. Lt. Ashley Gee
RODEO team member

"It's the broncs and the blood, it's the steers and the mud, and they call the thing rodeo." Garth Brooks' version of *The Rodeo* is probably what many of us think about when we hear the term, but for Warriors of the North here and the Air Mobility Command it has a different meaning.

This RODEO isn't about horses and bull riding, it's about readiness.

"AMC's RODEO is about air refueling, air drop, air land, security forces, aerial port operations, aerial medical evacuation, maintenance and international competition," said Maj. Eric Brumskill, Grand Forks Air Force Base's former RODEO team chief. At a minimum, the "stock" for this RODEO includes KC-135s, both AMC and international, KC-10s, C-130s, C-5s, C-17s and C-141s.

"RODEO showcases the talent of

AMC and international competitors for tankers and airlift," said Major Brumskill. "It's an chance for the best to showcase their capabilities and procedures and promote esprit de corps."

In 1962, the former Military Airlift Command held a competition where bombers and tankers competed in combat skills to enhance their techniques and procedures. This was the basis for today's RODEO.

In 1979, the competition expanded to include international air mobility partners and was held every two years, until recently. This year, four years after the last AMC RODEO, McChord Air Force Base, Wash., will hold the RODEO competition scheduled for June 19-24.

The Grand Forks RODEO team is a combination of pilots, boom operators, maintainers, and security forces. Each of the Warriors will go through rigorous training for the next few

weeks until they leave for RODEO competition. The flight crew, maintainers, booms and security forces will all compete for their own trophy. At the end of RODEO, all the scores will be combined for an air refueling and airlift team winner and an overall competition winner.

"One specific jet is assigned for the actual competition, and no one will be allowed to touch that jet except for the RODEO team," said Major Brumskill. The flight crew and maintainers will know that jet's every quirk, he added.

The pilots will be judged on two sorties, to include landings and air refueling. "If you're not right over your target at the exact required second, then you lose points and if you lose a few points, it could make or break the entire competition," said

Major Brumskill.

The flight crew must be right on cue because they will also have to make a perfect connection to refuel a specific aircraft. On the ground they will be

judged on cargo loading.

The maintainers will be judged on how quickly they can ready a jet as well as their attention to detail.

"One rivet can determine which main-

tainers win," said Major Brumskill.

Finally, the security forces team will have to prove their combat expertise in several competitions.

They will not only have to demonstrate their marksmanship but also run a demanding obstacle course.

"Our goal is to prove that Grand Forks is the best air refueling wing in AMC," said Major Brumskill. "We have to be humble, control what we can and represent the base and community well."

"It's an opportunity for the best to showcase their capabilities..."

--Maj. Eric Brumskill

Base honors friend, welcomes new honorary

By Capt. Michael Meridith
Public affairs

After more than a quarter-century of service to the Warriors of the North, Grand Forks attorney John Marshall stepped down as honorary wing commander during a ceremony at the Northern Lights Club April 20.

In emotional remarks before the wing's quarterly awards ceremony, Mr. Marshall thanked the base's Airmen and past and present leaders for allowing him the opportunity to serve. He also reflected on why that service meant so much to him.

During a trip to the Vietnam War Memorial in Washington, D.C., Mr. Marshall saw the name of a friend who was listed as missing in action. "I put my hand on his name and said 'thanks.' That's what changed everything for me. I told myself I would never be reduced to thanking a wall again," he said.

The pledge, according to Mr. Marshall, is reflected in his long-term relationship with the wing and its Airmen – a relationship that allows him to offer his personal gratitude to servicemembers for the freedom he says he had long taken for granted.

Mr. Marshall's stepping down doesn't signify an end to his relationship with the wing. He remains the wing's second ambassador. Colonel Bill Bender, 319th Air Refueling Wing commander, took time during the ceremony to name him honorary wing commander emeritus as well.

"John Marshall is a great American, and if I had to use just one word to describe him, I'd use 'character.' It's not only what John is about, it's what the wing is about. It describes the values we hold close to our heart," said Col. Bender.

Shortly after Mr. Marshall stepped down, K.C. Inman and Dennis Potter, chair and vice chair of the Grand Forks / East Grand Forks Military Affairs Committee, accepted posts as honorary vice wing and wing commander, respectively. The change marks a realignment of the honorary commander program. Future MAC chair and vice chairs will assume the posts annually, continuing the program designed to foster a long-term relationship between the military and civilian communities.

One of Mr. Potter's first acts as honorary wing commander was to donate \$1,000 on behalf of the MAC to the base team participating in this summer's

air mobility RODEO competition.

Visibly moved by the ceremony, Dennis Potter summed up his feelings, saying "Thank you. We would not be here if it weren't for all you've done to protect our freedom."



Photo by Tech. Sgt. Richard Lisum

Col. Bill Bender, wing commander, presents the wing flag to Dennis Potter, signifying his new position. John Marshall, outgoing, 25-year veteran of the post, looks on.